

Errors found in insurance claims of System employees

by Angel Stokes

Battalion Staff
The insurance claims investigation program — initiated in mid-February by the Office of Insurance and Risk Management at Texas A&M — has uncovered \$21,600 worth of discrepancies in insurance claims filed by Texas A&M System employees as of May 31, the assistant director for the insurance and retirement program said Tuesday.

The program began as a trial procedure for cost containment after insurance premiums increased in the fall for System employees covered by

the employees' group insurance plan, assistant director Mary Jo Hurley said. She said the investigations have involved not only employees in Bryan and College Station, but also employees working anywhere in the University System.

The claims investigator, Bernadette Mayer, is a registered nurse and has a masters in business administration, Hurley said. She said that Mayer is very qualified to find mistakes that could slip by most people.

"The insurance claims program is coming along so well," Hurley said,

"that we're thinking of expanding it."

The biggest aim of the program is to inform employees to check medical bills because doctors and hospitals aren't infallible, she said.

Some of the discovered overcharges occurred when a patient was billed twice for a room or was billed for hospital services or drugs that were never received, she said.

If we can come up with documentation that the services were never received or that duplicate billing occurred, the hospital will write off the charges, she said.

Most of the errors found were cler-

ical, she said, and resulted from communication problems within the hospital.

If a doctor's fees are higher than the usual rates charged by doctors in the same area, a letter informing both the doctor and the employee of the usual fees for certain services in that area is written, Hurley said. She said this is a typical practice of insurance companies.

It isn't done to tell the doctor what his fee should be, but just to let both parties know the rates acknowledged as typical by the insurance company, she said.

Special session to begin today

United Press International
AUSTIN — A compromise on brucellosis control, an agreement to keep human rights out of the purview of the state employment agency and \$15.5 million available for college construction should ease the tasks of Texas legislators beginning a special session today.

After less than a month's hiatus, lawmakers were called back to the State Capitol by Gov. Mark White to resolve disputes remaining from the 140-day regular session that ended May 30. The agenda for the special session, which is expected to last one week, includes bills to extend the life of the Texas Employment Commission, set up a state brucellosis control program and fund a library and gymnasium at Texas Southern University to help with a federal desegregation order.

White also has been urged to allow lawmakers to debate a state water plan, injury insurance for farm workers, a human rights commission and several other issues. His official list of session topics was expected later today. Committee hearings were scheduled for this afternoon on brucellosis and the TEC and for Saturday on TSU construction funding.

Comptroller Bob Bullock said Tuesday the state had \$15.5 million available to spend during the special session. A motion to continue the operation of the TEC failed on the final day of the regular session when the House refused to accept a Senate amendment that would have placed a

state human rights commission within the agency.

A spokesman for Sen. Lloyd Doggett, D-Austin, said the senator had backed off his plan to try to place a human rights agency within the TEC and instead was considering bills to put such a body in the Department of Labor and Standards or set it up as a separate state agency.

"The TEC is definitely the third choice and that basically is not under serious consideration now," aide Dan Brody said Tuesday.

The agency that administers federal unemployment benefits and helps jobless Texans find work is scheduled to be disbanded Sept. 1 under the state's "sunset" provisions.

Cattlemen and senators who opposed a brucellosis bill during the regular session apparently were reaching a compromise that should allow quick action on a bill to bring state regulations on control of the infectious cattle disease into compliance with federal guidelines.

"The governor is working towards a fair, equitable solution and towards legislation that would be acceptable and economical," cattlemen and former Gov. Dolph Briscoe, one of the most vocal opponents of state brucellosis control, said Tuesday.

"We're discussing a vaccination program instead of the current test and slaughter program, which is very expensive," Briscoe said, adding he was unsure whether federal officials would accept a vaccination program.



staff photo by Barry Papke

It went that way

Keith Skaar, left, advises Samantha Conole, a seventh grader at Allen Academy, who is practicing her golf technique Tuesday. Conole is a participant in Jackie Sherrill's All Sports Camp, a two week summer camp for youth. The camp features 13 activities including golf, horseback riding and football. Skaar is a petroleum geology senior from Humble.

Texas defense funding set

United Press International
WASHINGTON — The U.S. House approved a \$7 billion appropriations bill Tuesday for military construction that makes Texas second in nation for funding.

The outlay for Texas totals 0.49 million, up \$8.9 million from department of Defense request of 1.5 million. That ranked behind Florida, which received \$484.5 million out of \$495 million contained in the original request.

The 339-square-mile Army base at Fort Hood got the lion's share of the appropriations, with projects totaling \$77.1 million. Heading the list of 14 major construction projects at Fort Hood were multi-purpose aircraft maintenance shops at \$13.2 mil-

lion and \$11.4 million, and equipment shops worth \$8.4 million and \$8.2 million.

The biggest single construction project in the state was at Fort Bliss, the air defense center near El Paso, where a multi-purpose training range worth \$18.5 million was funded.

The bill contained big outlays for troop quarters at three Texas Air Force bases. Sheppard AFB near Wichita Falls topped the list with \$7.2 million for bachelor enlisted housing, and \$5.2 million for visiting officer housing.

Fort Hood, the Army's largest base, supports 42,000 soldiers assigned to two armored divisions and a helicopter brigade under the auspices of III Corps Headquarters.

Ride operates space medicine machine in shuttle

United Press International
CAPE CANAVERAL — Sally Ride, away through her milestone shuttle mission, ran an experimental medicine machine Tuesday while developing a "breakthrough" drug to treat a hormone deficiency.

The Challenger's biological refinement experiment, expected to lead to commercial drug production in space in 1987, was a seven-hour job for the year-old astrophysicist who once dined dust between the stars.

Ride, Robert Crippen, Frederick

Hauck, John Fabian and Norman Thagard were in their fourth day of flight and seemed to be enjoying every minute of it. They already have logged more than 1 million miles in orbit.

Ride reported turning on the 6-foot-tall drug machine at 4 a.m. and 45 minutes later demonstrated how it worked in a television show from space as Challenger circled Earth for the 47th time.

"Isn't science wonderful?" she said, floating next to the unit mounted on

the wall of the lower level of Challenger's cabin, next to the main hatch.

She explained that an electric field separates materials as a biological solution flows through the machine. Much higher concentrations and greater purity can be obtained in weightlessness than on Earth. "The point, of course, is to separate out the protein material we're interested in," Ride said. The machine's developers are particularly interested in hormones.

The happy-go-lucky astronauts be-

gan their day at 1 a.m. when mission control radioed up the reveille bugle call followed by "When You're Smiling."

The crew responded by radioing back a few strains of "Tequila Sunrise."

"You know why we're such a happy crew," cracked Fabian.

The astronauts' workday schedule is moving earlier daily to prepare them for Friday's dawn landing at the Kennedy Space Center. President Reagan will be among those on hand

to watch the first return of a spaceship to its landing base.

A band of thunderstorms swept across the oceanside spaceport before dawn today, but an astronaut in mission control said that was a good omen "we'll have good weather on Friday."

"Sounds good to me," said Fabian.

The astronauts got some good news early today when mission control reported the Indonesian communications satellite they launched Sunday had performed its final rock-

et maneuver to go into a stationary orbit 22,300 miles high. The crew gathered some more scientific information today from some of the experiments mounted on the West German satellite still anchored in the ship's open cargo bay. The satellite was shut down at 4:30 a.m. to allow a computer to cool.

Before it was turned off, however, controllers said some good data were obtained, including ground observations from an Earth resources scanner.

Counseling center teaches good study habits

Editor's note: This is the second entry in a three-part series on the Texas A&M Student Counseling Service.

by Robert McGlohn

Battalion Staff
Talking to yourself can be dangerous to your grades, says Dr. Betty Milburn, a counseling psychologist at the Texas A&M Student Counseling Service, even if you don't answer back.

Helping students learn to control negative self-talk is one of many things Milburn does for students with academic troubles. Milburn, one of 14 counselors for the Student Counseling Service, specializes in academic counseling.

"I find that there is a lot of self-talk that the students are doing that contributes to academic problems," Milburn said. "In other words, they have assignments that are due and they say 'Oh, I'll do it later' or 'I'm hungry now' or 'I'm not interested' or 'This is boring.' That ends up in they're not doing the studying until it's too late."

Self-talk is a contributing factor to

what Milburn sees as the most frequent problem that students have — not studying enough.

"I would say that the typical (problem) we find is lack of adequate study time and lack of use of some very easy (study) techniques," Milburn said.

An important factor in learning to study more is habit, Milburn said. Students need to unlearn bad habits, she said, and to develop good ones.

Keeping that in mind, Milburn said she concentrates on three areas when counseling students: setting the academic stage, learning how to study, and improving testmanship.

The first of those three is the most important, she said, explaining that in order for study techniques or test skills to help students, they first must sit down to study.

And where they sit down to study can be important, she said. "It's really a matter of establishing habit," she said. "The key thing is to have a place and to have a time set aside, rather than leaving it to chance."

It doesn't really matter where a

student's study hole is, she said, adding that some students use the library, whereas other students say there is too much distracting activity there. What is important, she said, is to use the same place everytime, until it becomes a habit. That studying place should mean "study" to the student, she said, just as the bed means "sleep" and the table means "food."

"The bottom line is do what works for you, but be honest about it," she said. "Then you don't have to spend 30 minutes gearing up."

Once a student has established a study habit, Milburn said, the next thing to do is learn how to study, something she says many students don't know.

One important study technique she teaches is how to review notes, she said. Notes are not something that one takes and forgets until just before the exam, she said, but should be reviewed on a regular, preferably daily, basis.

Milburn also has advice on how to take notes, how to read textbooks and how to ask questions in class.

Another area Milburn covers in the academic counseling clinics or private consultation is testmanship. Some people, she said, just don't know how to take tests.

There are several techniques students can use to perform better on tests, she said. These include: working down formulas, equations and rules at the start of the test; and reviewing the answers.

There are three basic ways in which students can learn about testmanship, study techniques and study conducive environments, she said. They are the academic skills clinic, individual counseling and the peer advisor program.

The academic skills clinic is a program in lecture format in which students learn how to study more effectively, Milburn said. "Basically that's a one-shot program where we overview academic skills," she said.

The clinics are held frequently throughout the year, with up to ten students attending each clinic. However, one drawback to the clinic, she said, is that, because of the

class size and time restraints, there's not much time for student feedback. For that a student must seek individual counseling.

Students are often referred to a counselor after attending an academic skills clinic, she said, because more can be accomplished in a one-on-one situation.

Another program offered by the Student Counseling Service is the peer counseling program.

In that program a student volunteer from the junior honor society meets with the student in need of help for study hints.

"It's not counseling per se," Milburn said. "It's peers sharing with (students) the study techniques that seem to work for them. That seems to be really helpful for students."

For more information about the academic counseling programs, students can drop by the Student Counseling Service office on the first floor of the Academic Building or phone 845-1651.

The office will be relocated to the third floor of the YMCA Building in October.



staff photo by Barry Papke

Boy, am I stuffed!

Wendy Durbin found a unique job this summer. She is working as a taxidermist in Bryan. Tuesday she was putting finishing touches on a Cape Buffalo. Durbin is a second year veterinary student from Mansfield.

inside

Classified	4
Local	3
Opinions	2
Sports	7
State	4
National	5



forecast

Cloudy to partly cloudy and muggy with a 30 percent chance of showers or thundershowers through Thursday. The high today and tomorrow near 89. Tonight's low near 71.